

Appln. No. 10/623,642

Attorney Docket No. 10541-1814

II. Remarks

In response to the Office Action mailed January 3, 2005, kindly enter the foregoing amendment and consider the following remarks. The Office Action and the references cited therein have been carefully considered. In this Amendment, claims 1, 13 and 17 have been amended and claim 15 has been cancelled. Thus, claims 1-14 and 16-22 are pending and are at issue herein. In view of these amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of this application is requested.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW

The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for conducting a telephonic interview which concluded on March 23, 2005. In the interview, the Applicants discussed the Joos reference and agreed that the filter and its housing 5 only include a single outlet. The Examiner agreed that the Joos reference does not disclose two separate fluidic outlets within the filter. Accordingly, Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 17 to make clear that the filter itself includes first and second outlets, but note that prior to amendment the claims recited the structure which defines over the Joos reference. In view of the interview and the remarks below, favorable consideration of the claims is requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating allowable subject matter. On page 4 of the Office Action, claims 5-8, 15 and 16 and 19 were allowable if rewritten in independent format. The allowable subject matter of dependent claim 15 has been incorporated into independent claim 13. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

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CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC §103

Claims 1-4, 9 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Joos reference (U.S. Pat. No. 6,412,475). Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Joos reference in view of the Laue reference (U.S. Pat. No. 5,392,750). Claims 11, 17, 18 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Joos reference in view of the Ramamurthy reference (U.S. Pat. No. 6,705,258). In sum, the above-noted claims stand rejected over the Joos reference or some combination of the Joos reference with either the Laue reference or the Ramamurthy reference.

As noted above, and as described in paragraph [0005] of the present application, the fuel supply system and in-tank fuel filter guards against bleed down into the tank when the vehicle is turned off by providing two distinct outlets from the fuel filter. Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to make clear that the first and second outlets of the filter are two separate fluidic outlet pathways. As also noted above, this language was agreed upon by the Examiner in the interview. Similarly, independent claim 17 has been amended to make clear that the first outlet includes a first stand pipe fluidically connected to the housing and a second outlet including a second stand pipe in fluidic communication with the housing.

As discussed with the Examiner in the interview, the Joos reference merely discloses a filter in housing 5 having a single outlet. Further, it was noted that the Joos reference only provides schematic depictions, and thus the actual structure is difficult to determine. For all these reasons, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of independent claims 1 and 17, as well as their dependent claims.

Independent claim 13 has been amended to include the subject matter of dependent claim 15, indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For these reasons, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of Independent claim 13, as well as its dependent claims.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that the specification is in order and that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that personal contact would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the Attorney of the Applicants at the earliest convenience of the Examiner.

3-24-05

Date

Respectfully submitted



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